Dan Mitchell's Blog Continues

Dan Mitchell's blog about UCLA and UC. The original goes back to 2009 at uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com. Daniel J.B. Mitchell is a Professor-Emeritus in the Anderson and Luskin Schools at UCLA.

Sunday, August 16, 2026

Overhead

From the Daily Californian: ***A White House science report released July 21 called for cutting back overhead costs universities collect on federal research grants, singling out rates that reach more than 40% of direct research costs at major institutions.*** *UC Berkeley's current rate is 60.5%, according to campus spokesperson Dan Mogulof. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy report, titled "Science: A New Golden Age," calls for accelerated grant review cycles, less duplicate paperwork and lower overhead payments that it claims support "administrative bloat."*

Indirect costs, formally called facilities and administrative costs, represent money the government pays on top of research funding to cover shared expenses of running a lab such as heat, electricity, building maintenance and shared equipment. Universities individually negotiate a rate with the federal agencies that provide the majority of their federal research funding, but often do not collect the full amount. Mogulof said UC Berkeley collected roughly $105 million in overhead costs on federal awards in fiscal year 2025, specifying the 60.5% figure overstates what the university actually collects, because sponsors can restrict what the money can be spent on and lower rates apply to many awards. Mogulof said UC Berkeley's more realistic rate is about 32.8%...

Archive

August 2026 (65)
July 2026 (44)

Labels

- academic freedom
- admissions
- Alcorn State U
- Arizona State University
- athletics
- Boston University
- Brown University
- CalTech
- Colorado State U
- Columbia
- Cornell
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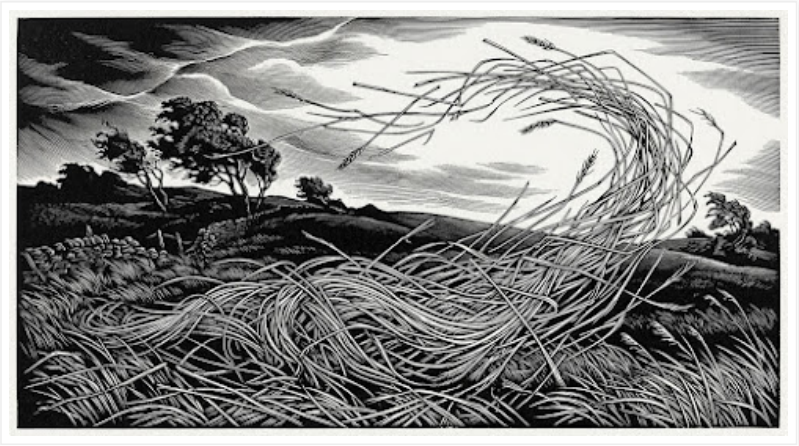
- Dartmouth
- diversity
- East Carolina State U
- email fraud
- faculty center
- Fisk
- fund raising
- Georgetown
- governor
- Harvard
- health care
- Johns Hopkins
- Michigan State University
- Middlebury
- Milliken
- miscellaneous

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/national/uc-berkeley-collects-105m-in-research-overhead-costs-as-white-house-calls-for-cuts/article_d858beff-e127-4f7a-a610-6111f596a852.html.

at August 16, 2026 No comments:

Labels: politics, UC-Berkeley

Straws in the Wind - Part 435



From the NY Times: ...*While some universities are completely online, an increasing number of brick-and-mortar schools are expanding their online offerings. Sometimes students can earn full degrees online. In other cases, they take individual classes. In this realm, A.I. cheating is quickly accelerating beyond the copy-and-pasting of chatbot-produced essays and problem sets. A.I. agents have made it possible for students to outsource a semester of work. With simple commands — "log in and complete my quiz" — a student can unleash what is, essentially, an imitation of themselves. Agents can watch lecture videos, take tests, write papers and chat with classmates about reading assignments.*

There have always been questions about whether degrees from online programs are of equal value to those earned on campuses. But policymakers and education leaders have spent two decades championing online learning as an equity tool allowing nontraditional college students, like low-income working parents, to study wherever and whenever is convenient for them. Many students say online classes put degrees within reach. Now, though, the accessibility of A.I. is deepening misgivings about the most accessible form of higher education...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/10/us/ai-cheating-online-degrees.html.

at August 16, 2026 No comments:

Labels: online education

No More

- MIT
- Northwestern U
- Oakland U
- online education
- pension
- pensions
- plagiarism
- politics
- Princeton U
- Rice
- Rutgers
- Saint Louis U
- Smith College
- South Florida State College
- Stanford
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- strikes
- traffic
- transportation
- Tufts
- tuition
- U of Alabama
- U of Chicago
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- U of Kansas
- U of Maryland
- U of Michigan
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- UC budget crisis
- UC Regents
- uc retirement
- UC-Berkeley
- UC-Davis
- UC-Irvine
- UC-San Diego
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- UCLA
- UCPD
- ucrp
- University Club
- Washington U
- West Point
- Western U of Health Sciences
- William Carey U
- Yale

Report Abuse

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Search

From the Daily Bruin: ***UCLA will shut down two of its childcare centers*** *– one of which employed a teacher arrested for child sexual abuse in 2024 – next June, university leadership announced [last] Thursday evening. The Early Care and Education program – including the Krieger and University Village centers – will close June 30, 2027, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt said in an email to parents obtained by the Daily Bruin. ECE, which largely serves employees' children, is "not sustainable" for the university to continue operating, Hunt added in the email...*

The closure also comes as UCLA faces budgetary woes*, causing cuts across campus. ECE announced in April that it would raise tuition, stop offering meals for children and pause hiring amid university-wide budget shortfalls. ECE reversed the decision ten days later, after parents protested outside of Chancellor Julio Frenk's residence...*

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/08/14/ucla-childcare-program-which-faced-2024-sex-abuse-case-to-close-amid-budget-deficit.

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The article above goes on to reinforce the idea of UCLA's budget "deficit" as the cause. We won't rehearse here the saga of the firing of UCLA's CFO after he said Bad Things about campus budget statements released before his appointment. The article, however, does rehearse that history and the remarks of the subsequent interim CFO about the "deficit." However, we have no figures on the UCLA budget for last fiscal year (2025-26). And we have no projections for the current year (2026-27).

What we do have are unaudited financial statements for still earlier 2023-24 and 2024-25. As blog readers will know, we put such statements in a UCLA budget page on the Internet Archive so that they won't disappear.*

2023-24 is at:

https://ia903207.us.archive.org/35/items/ucla-budget-book-v-final-feb-2026/UCLA%20Annual%20Report%202023-2024.pdf

2024-25 is at:

https://ia903207.us.archive.org/35/items/ucla-budget-book-v-final-feb-2026/UCLA%20Annual%20Report%202024-2025.pdf

The bottom line for those two years was not deficits. The net position of UCLA in fact significantly improved in each year by over $1 billion/year. (See page 10 of each report.)

Of course, things could have totally turned around to the negative in 2025-26 and might still look bleak for the current year 2026-27. But we have no macro-level figures for either of these years. There is nothing available comparable to the micro-level data the fired CFO provided before his sudden departure. And our suspicion remains that rather than a withholding of figures being the culprit, an alternative explanation is that the folks in Murphy Hall don't actually know what the numbers are. We'd be delighted to be proved wrong.

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*https://archive.org/details/ucla-budget-book-v-final-feb-2026.

at August 16, 2026 No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Saturday, August 15, 2026

Don't even walk on Wilshire

We've been advising you not to drive on Wilshire near UCLA due to subway construction. Now you shouldn't even walk there. See below:

Wilshire Bl: North Sidewalk Closure

Summary

Construction of two emergency stair exits for the UCLA Station will result in a full closure of the north sidewalk along Wilshire Bl between Gayley Av and Westwood Bl starting August 17, 2026, through December.

During this closure, entry to LA Fitness from Wilshire Bl and the Wilshire Bl entrance to the Westwood Medical Plaza will be closed continuously. Visitors may access the buildings through alternate entrances.

There will also be intermittent closures of the south sidewalk along Wilshire Bl between Gayley Av and Westwood Bl to accommodate concrete pours and material deliveries. Most of these activities are anticipated to occur during night shift operations (9pm to 5am) to minimize impacts.

Should both the north and south sides of this Wilshire Bl sidewalk are closed simultaneously, pedestrians will be temporarily detoured via Lindbrook Av.

Noteworthy

All work has received the necessary permits and approvals.

Access to driveways, residences & businesses will be maintained at all times unless notified in advance.

Access for pedestrians will be maintained outside of construction zones.

Access for the Fire Department and emergency responders will be maintained.

Parking restrictions will be implemented in the immediate area of the work zone.

Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change.

24/7 Hotline: 213-922-6934

Closure Map

Source: https://cloud.sfmc.metro.net/WilshireBl_NorthSidewalkClosure.

at August 15, 2026 No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

Don't even walk on Wilshire

We've been telling you not to drive on Wilshire near UCLA while the subway was under construction. Now we advise against walking. See below:

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- Construction is dynamic and schedules are subject to change.
- **24/7 Hotline:** 213-922-6934

Access

- Access for Emergency Vehicles & First Responders will be maintained.
- Local access to residential streets and businesses will be maintained via side streets

Source: https://cloud.sfmc.metro.net/WilshireBl_NorthSidewalkClosure.

at August 15, 2026 No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

What unpatriotic lessons were they teaching at UCLA, c1935?

The caption for this photo from UCLA's digital archive says "Student teachers take Pledge of Allegiance to the flag at UCLA, c1935." But when yours truly was in the first grade in 1948, he was taught that you (must!) put your hand on your heart during the pledge which you must also learn to recite "by heart." No alternatives were offered. And woe to the first grader who didn't do it.

More curious still, is the fact that the student teachers don't seem to be saying anything.

§172. Pledge of allegiance to the flag; manner of delivery

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, "I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.", should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the ***right hand over the heart****. When not in uniform men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute*.

Source: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-1994-title36/html/USCODE-1994-title36-chap10.htm.

So, what were they teaching at UCLA in the mid-1930s?

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Source: https://digital.library.ucla.edu/catalog/ark:/21198/zz00255160.

at August 15, 2026 No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 434

From Inside Higher Ed: *When Agenia Clark took the helm of Fisk University in late 2023, she made it her mission to secure financial stability for the 160-year-old historically Black institution, which has seen its share of financial struggles and accreditation challenges. That led her to spearhead the development of Quantum Leap, a $900 million master plan whose details were first unveiled in May. It aims to grow enrollment at the Nashville campus to 1,500 students—up from a little more than 1,000 now—as well as spend $500 million on renovations and another $400 million on a 100,000-square-foot technology and innovation center, which will house a massive, high-powered data center.*

The university says the innovation center "is intended to bring critical technology access to North Nashville, enhancing our curriculum and research capabilities and ensuring our students are prepared to enter the increasingly tech-driven workforce." But it's also become one of the latest flashpoints of the mounting nationwide backlash against the rapid expansion of data centers. Some critics say the proliferation of these centers is following historic urban development patterns that have disproportionately hurt marginalized communities...

While data centers have been around for decades, they've rapidly expanded in volume and capability during the AI boom of the past few years. According to Pew Research Center, as of April, more than 3,000 data centers were operating across the United States—with high concentrations in the South—and at least 1,500 are more in development. A growing number of colleges and universities—including the University of Michigan, the University of Alabama and Oakland University—have announced plans to open their own data centers to support campus infrastructure, AI research and industry collaboration...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/tech-innovation/artificial-intelligence/2026/08/07/will-data-center-bring-risk-or-reward-fisk.

at August 15, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Fisk, Oakland U, U of Alabama, U of Michigan

Electric Buses

UCLA began using electric buses in 2016, as the photo above shows. More are planned for the Olympics in 2028, including a wireless charging arrangement built into the street. Local congressional rep Ted Lieu reportedly got $250,000 in federal money recently for such buses at UCLA.

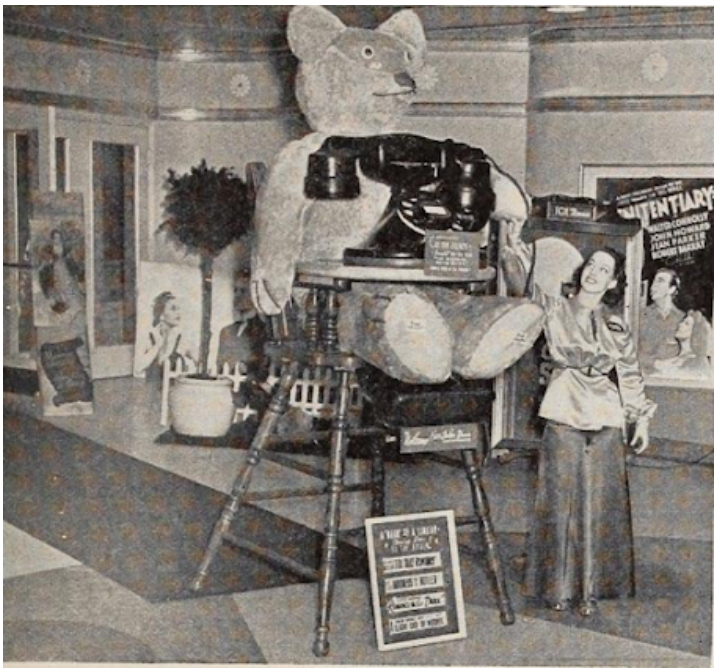
Source of information: https://dailybruin.com/2026/08/12/north-westwood-neighborhood-council-recap-aug-5; https://www.facebook.com/RepTedLieu/photos/1564004928417906/.

at August 15, 2026 No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

Friday, August 14, 2026

Bruin Theater to Reopen



*Joe Bruin at a promotion of the Bruin Theater, 1938**

As blog readers will surely know, there are two sibling old fashioned single-screen theaters in Westwood that were closed and appeared endangered. Now it appear both the more prominent Fox Village (because of its tower) and the Bruin will reopen. They have been used in recent years for movie premiers.

From Deadline: *The Bruin Theater in the Westwood neighborhood of Los Angeles is coming back with a hopeful re-opening in mid-October thanks to Toronto-based exhibitor Rui Pereira. Pereira recently signed a lease with the Martyn Skouras family (descendants of Spyros Panagiotis Skouras, president of 20th Century Fox), which owns the Bruin.*

The Bruin Theater, which originally opened its doors in 1937, closed in July 2024 alongside its historic brother The Village after Regency Theaters' lease ended. Pereira is a longtime theater owner in Canada... Pereira tells Deadline that the theater is in very good shape. He's bringing back the 70MM and 35MM projectors and making upgrades to the digital projectors. Seats are in good working shape in addition to the screen. His mission is to keep the theater's originality intact a la his previous properties. "I want to keep the essence of the theater, I don't want to erase its history or gloss it over," he said.

Pereira added that one hope down the road is to potentially add two screening rooms to the upstairs (15-seat theater venues). He's already been approached by studios for potential premieres and screenings; hence there's a chance we could see doors open before mid-October for special events. Before the venue opens, you'll see the marquee lit up at some point with ads for Warner Bros' Practical Magic 2. There was buzz for some time that Jason Reitman was making a go at the Bruin after purchasing The Village, which is set to undergo further restorations. However, we hear the Bruin wasn't for sale...

Full story at https://deadline.com/2026/07/the-bruin-theater-westwood-re-opening-1237012571/.

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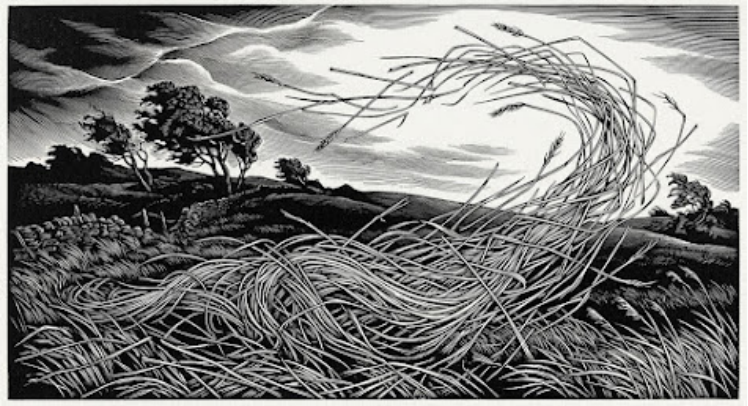
*Image from https://archive.org/details/motionpictureher1301unse/page/n611/mode/2up.

at August 14, 2026 No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 433



From the Mercury News: *Stanford University has ditched its Flock camera system and hired a new license plate reader firm following controversy over who can access the images captured. The South Bay university signed a contract with Genetec Cloudrunner to provide cameras that can read license plates, collecting images its public safety department can use to investigate crimes, Stanford University said in a press release. "Unlike the Flock system, the new system is designed for use within a single institution," said Patrick Dunkley, Stanford's vice provost for institutional equity, access, and community.*

Slightly under two years ago, Stanford University installed the Flock camera system at university entrances. Stanford, at the time, said it wouldn't share any information harvested from the Flock cameras with other police agencies. Over the past several years, concerns have emerged nationwide over Flock camera systems. Its systems, critics say, allow law enforcement to access images from other agencies via the networked license plate readers...

"These license plate reader cameras are an important investigative tool," Stanford Department of Public Safety Chief Laura Wilson said. "They are just one of the ways that DPS is leveraging technology to help keep our community safe."...

Full story at https://www.mercurynews.com/2026/08/08/police-stanford-flock-camera-school-safety-crime-privacy-internet-ice/.

at August 14, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Stanford

Patch Money?

Yesterday, we posted about the possibility that Berkeley athletics could deal with its budgetary problems by hosting concerts in its stadium. Today we note another patch on the budget:

From the Daily Californian: *In a first-of-its-kind collaboration, Cal Athletics has cemented itself in history as the first ACC program to sign a jersey patch sponsorship with Dialpad, an "AI platform for customer experience." The patch will be displayed on all 30 of the different sports' jerseys. For the Bears, the new partnership is the largest corporate partnership in the school's history... The decision comes on the heels of an NCAA decision from January allowing such sponsorships in college sports. According to the NCAA, the legislation is set to take effect Aug. 1, just before the college football season. The ruling allows for teams to have up to two commercial logos on their uniforms and one more on equipment during the preseason and regular season...*

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/sports/special-report/cal-athletics-inks-first-of-its-kind-partnership-with-dialpad/article_47e2c3b9-13ff-4509-8798-346584bda033.html.

at August 14, 2026 No comments:

Labels: athletics, UC-Berkeley

Thursday, August 13, 2026

Hines

From the NY Times: *Thomas S. Hines, [a UCLA] architectural historian whose thorough research, crystalline writing and unending passion for the urban landscape of Los Angeles did much to cement the region's reputation as a global center for modernist design in the 20th century, died on July 26 in Santa Monica, Calif. He was 89. His son, Taylor Hines, said the death, at a hospital, was from complications of pneumonia...*

Professor Hines's achievement was twofold: He not only demonstrated that the modernist architecture of midcentury Southern California was worthy of systematic historical attention, but he did so by expanding the scope of his field to include economic, social and cultural history. Rather than seeing the architecture of Los Angeles as an outlier to European and New York

modernism — or the region as merely a refuge for European architects fleeing fascism — he showed that California modernism had its own history and dynamics...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2026/08/07/books/thomas-hines-dead.html.

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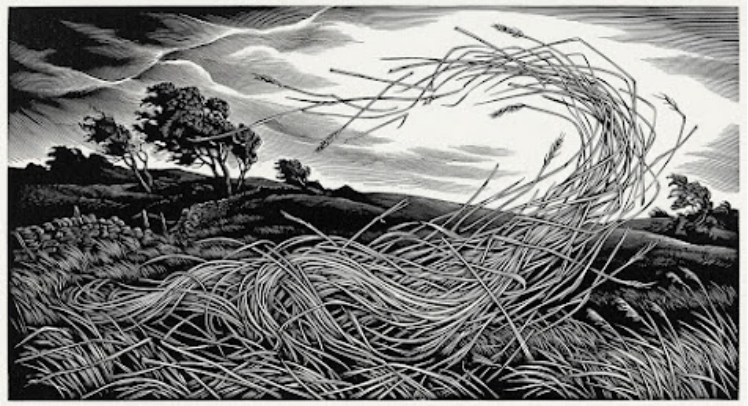
Lecture on LA architecture by Hines (2010):

https://dn800307.us.archive.org/0/items/sacramento-city-at-risk/Hines%20on%20LA%20architecture%205-15-2010.mp4.

at August 13, 2026 No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 432



From the Chronicle of Higher Education: *The Department of Education's... letter outlining principles for "every postsecondary institution" in the country was a bombshell for two reasons. One: The Trump administration was asking college presidents to sign onto its overarching vision for the sector. Two: Several prominent higher-ed leaders were reported to have helped draft it. The Association of American Universities was reportedly the primary partner... Douglas A. Girod, chancellor of the University of Kansas, was supposed to have been another major player. The very idea caused "great consternation to the KU faculty," said Ronald M. Barrett-Gonzalez, a professor of aerospace engineering there.*

...Andrew D. Martin, chancellor of Washington University in St. Louis, issued a statement saying: "For several months, I have participated in broader discussions with the White House and other higher-education leaders about issues affecting the sector. I expect those conversations helped inform the administration's thinking around their Monday letter. I was not involved, however, in the drafting of the letter." ...In an interview with The Chronicle, Barbara R. Snyder, president of the AAU, described a complicated feedback process with the Trump administration in which AAU representatives had little control over drafts. She, Girod, and Ronald J. Daniels, president of the Johns Hopkins University, met with officials from the Education Department and the White House two or three times in person and a couple of times over the phone, she said. Girod and Daniels were acting in their capacity as chair and vice chair of AAU's board. They always met with Trump officials as a group of three, Snyder said.

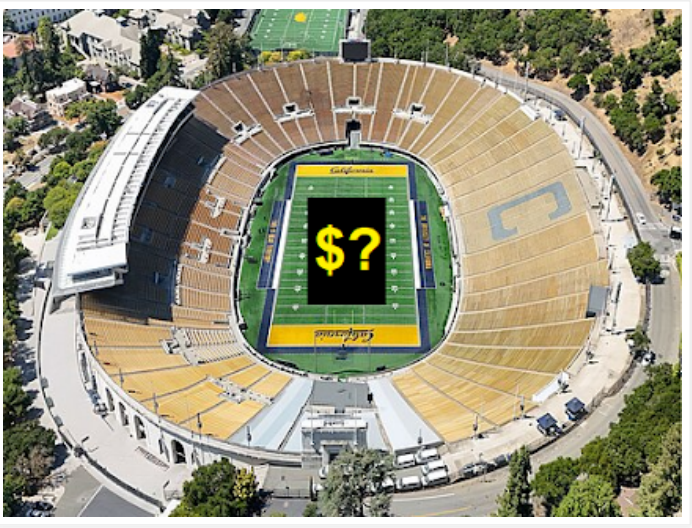
They provided feedback on drafts, which they did not receive copies of. They were allowed to see them only during the meetings. Without access to past drafts, Snyder said she couldn't exactly recall what changed over the course of their meetings, but she said: "The first draft we saw was already quite different from the compact, and the final draft is quite different from the first draft. Did they listen to some of our suggestions? Yes. Did they take all of our suggestions? No." Asked if Snyder's description of the meetings was accurate, a spokesperson for the Education Department answered with a short statement: "We appreciate the candid dialogue with bold university leaders who are helping refocus higher education on its foundational commitment to academic excellence." ...

Full story at https://www.chronicle.com/article/college-leaders-play-down-their-involvement-in-compact-2-0.

at August 13, 2026 No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Johns Hopkins, politics, U of Kansas, Washington U

Music Money?



From the San Francisco Chronicle: *UC Berkeley is close to reaching an agreement to host the first major concert at Memorial Stadium in 36 years, in an effort to generate fresh revenue for the school's financially stretched athletic department. If the deal is finalized, it would mark the first concert at the stadium since Paul McCartney came to Berkeley for two sold-out shows in the spring of 1990...*

The Panoramic Hill Association, comprised of homeowners near the stadium, filed a lawsuit (along with the city of Berkeley and California Oak Foundation) against UC in 2006 and reached a settlement four years later. That settlement, which included a commitment to prohibit "amplified music concerts" according to the university, expired in January...

Cal officials clarified... saying the concert with an undisclosed performer is not yet a done deal.

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/sports/college/article/cal-close-landing-memorial-stadium-s-first-22375938.php.

at August 13, 2026 No comments:

Labels: athletics, UC-Berkeley

Wednesday, August 12, 2026

Going Down

We now have some numbers on federal funding cutbacks:

From the San Francisco Chronicle:

Citing a steep reduction in federal research grants to the University of California under the Trump administration, UC President James Milliken is asking California's congressional delegation for help in freeing up the stalled science funds. Grants from the National Science Foundation are down 39% from recent years, while funding from the National Institutes of Health has fallen by 22% as of July 13, Milliken told 54 members of Congress in a letter sent July 29, noting that these rates are a "substantially slower pace than historical norms."

The slowdowns not only hamper UC by forcing hiring freezes and research delays, Milliken wrote, but they also "affect the economy, biomedical advances, technology commercialization, national security research, and partnerships between academia and industry" across the country...

UC spent $102.4 million on outside legal counsel alone in fiscal 2025-26 — a nearly 57% increase from the $65.4 million spent the year before, UC told the Chronicle...

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/uc-congress-trump-research-funding-22376388.php.

at August 12, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Milliken, politics, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 431 (going beyond campus)

From The Dartmouth: *Dartmouth Dialogues, College President Sian Leah Beilock's signature initiative, is getting new leadership... Day-to-day operations on campus will be overseen by Stephanie Glaros, who previously worked with Dartmouth Dialogues as the facilitator of Story Corps One Small Step, a non-profit that organizes conversations across political differences.*

...[Former Executive Director Kristi Clemens said] that the next executive director, who will "optimistically" begin serving by spring 2027, will be better equipped to take Dartmouth Dialogues's "specialness" and "apply" it to a broader model that could work in other institutions and even high schools. "We're looking for somebody to be a national thought leader, to be somebody who has been doing this work across institutions, who's been doing this work across different fields, and can take Dartmouth Dialogues, with their expertise and their national or international connections, to the next level," she said.

Clemens said Jim Frank '65, Karen Frank and their son Daniel Frank '92's $25 million gift to the initiative — $10 million of which permanently endowed the executive director role — "allowed" the College to begin searching for a candidate with "national recognition" to fill the role...

Full story at https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2026/08/weaverbell-new-executive-director-will-build-dartmouth-dialogues-into-national-model.

at August 12, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Dartmouth

Somehow, money, football, and lettuce connect at Berkeley

From the Daily Californian: *Before its recent distribution of produce contaminated with cyclospora and salmonella, Taylor Farms filed a lawsuit against former executive Brian Thure, alleging more than $32 million was embezzled for unauthorized purchases including a $1 million endowment for the Cal football team. According to the lawsuit filed in June, Thure and his wife, Julie Thure, embezzled $32 million over five years by moving money through the alleged "sham entity" MTS Building and Electrical...*

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/city/law-and-justice/taylor-farms-sues-uc-berkeley-alumnus-over-embezzlement-including-1m-to-cal-football/article_b6f95e18-a766-4c65-b8fc-15ad9694bc20.html.

at August 12, 2026 No comments:

Labels: athletics, UC-Berkeley

Tuesday, August 11, 2026

Congressional Mail

Letter from UC President James B. Milliken

Re: Slow Spend Rate of Federal Scientific Agencies

UC Office of the President, July 29, 2026

California Congressional Delegation

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the University of California (UC) — a system of over 300,000 students, 266,000 faculty and staff, and 2.5 million alumni across ten campuses and six academic health centers — I write to express my deep concern regarding the significant slow spend rate of the federal science agencies.

The federal government's partnership with UC has always been essential to America's unmatched leadership in science and innovation, and today the significance of our work together is more important than ever. Reliable federal investment is essential to sustain American innovation in science and technology, train the students who will become the country's future workforce, retain and attract researchers who are working on our country's complex challenges and support the patients whose lives depend on this partnership. Federal investments in research have helped make UC America's leading public research university while generating discoveries, technologies, medical advances, and economic growth that benefit the entire nation.

Unfortunately, UC's status as the national leader in research, and America's position as a global research powerhouse, are increasingly at risk. Across multiple agencies — and most notably at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) — funding decisions, award processing, competitive renewals, and the release of new funding opportunities appear to be proceeding at a substantially slower pace than historical norms. At NIH, as of July 13, the agency's new award rate is 22% below pace relative to typical rates in past years. At NSF, as of July 13, the agency's new award rate is 39% below pace relative to typical rates in past years. While NIH's rate is improving, the pace continues to have a detrimental impact on UC and the biomedical research community's efforts to develop new cures and vaccines to address diseases.

As a top recipient of both NIH and NSF funding, UC's researchers and graduate students are disproportionately affected by these delays. But the consequences extend well beyond universities. Delays in federal research funding affect the economy, biomedical advances, technology commercialization, national security research, and partnerships between academia and industry. Our campuses are already experiencing the consequences of the slow spend rate. Some examples of impacts reported by some UC campuses include:

Significant delays in new awards, funding for recompetes and new research opportunities from NSF and NIH. These delays are forcing a systemwide reduction in facilities and administration costs, which support the broader research ecosystem.

Effectively freezing the hiring of new postdoctoral and graduate students, limiting job and economic growth and reducing our ability to train the next generation of scientists. Federal grant funding supports both advanced education and the development of the skillsets needed as part of the future STEM workforce.

Delays in onboarding faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars and graduate students, which are disrupting workforce continuity and making it more difficult to recruit and retain top talent.

Weakening university and industry research partnerships, which are critical to developing new technologies and supporting the future STEM workforce pipeline.

Strain on critical scientific infrastructure, which depends on stable and predictable funding to maintain research capacity and operational readiness.

If not addressed in the immediate future, the slow spend rate will detrimentally impact our ability to lead the nation and the world in scientific research. I respectfully ask that you use every mechanism available to ensure that the science agencies are implementing enacted appropriations consistent with congressional intent and processing awards, renewals, and funding opportunities in a timely manner.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or if there is anything the University can do to assist with your efforts. We appreciate your long-standing support.

Sincerely,

James B. Milliken

President

--

Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/letter-uc-president-james-b-milliken-re-slow-spend-rate-federal-scientific-agencies.

at August 11, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Milliken, politics, UC

Today Behind Closed Doors, The Regents Will Discuss The Problem

TO THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA:

Because the membership of the Advisory Group on Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues ("Advisory Group") includes five members of the Regents' Governance Committee, Compliance and Audit Committee, Finance and Capital Strategies Committee, Health Services Committee, Investments Committee, National Laboratories Committee, and the Public Engagement and Development Committee there exists the potential for having present a quorum of a Regents' Committee when the advisory committee meets.

This notice of meeting is served in order to comply fully with pertinent open meeting laws.

On Tuesday, August 11, 2026, there will be a Closed Session, Special Meeting of the Regents' Committees concurrent with the Advisory Group to discuss Research and Programs Funding Legal Issues (Closed Session Statute Citation: Litigation [Education Code section 92032(b)(5)].)

The meeting will convene at 4:00 p.m. at 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland and adjourn at approximately 5:00 p.m.

(Advisory Group members: Regents Anguiano, Chu, Cohen, Hernandez, Makarechian, Matosantos, Milliken, Reilly, Robinson, Sarris, and Sures)

Source: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/aug26/meeting-notice_federal-august-11-2026.pdf.

at August 11, 2026 No comments:

Labels: politics, UC Regents

Yale Deal - Part 10

From the Yale Daily News: *University President Maurie McInnis failed to assure student leaders that Yale wouldn't use students' rights as bargaining chips in its talks with the Trump administration, said four undergraduate and graduate leaders who met with McInnis... The leaders criticized McInnis' lack of transparency about the talks and the Yale administration's refusal to make explicit commitments about international students, diversity programs and transgender students. McInnis also dismissed that Yale's negotiations would mirror the deals peer institutions have made with the Trump administration in areas outside of admissions, one attendee said.*

...An information page about the Department of Justice negotiations that was recently posted on the University president's website notes that a deal would not compromise Yale's independence, academic freedom or its responsibilities to students, faculty and staff...

Full story at https://yaledailynews.com/articles/student-leaders-say-mcinnis-meeting-left-them-unassured-on-trump-talks.

at August 11, 2026 No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, politics, Yale

Straws in the Wind - Part 430 (athletics)

From the US Government Accountability Office (GAO): *Intercollegiate athletics at four-year colleges in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) are organized into divisions, subdivisions, and conferences. Division I (DI) colleges compete at the highest level and can offer students full athletics scholarships. Division II (DII) colleges typically offer partial athletics scholarships. In both divisions, expenses for most athletic programs were greater than the revenue they generated, according to GAO's analysis of NCAA data for the 2014–15 and 2023–24 academic years.*

In the 2023–24 academic year, the 352 DI colleges reported spending a total of $20.8 billion on athletics, which largely went to team and game expenses (including travel, equipment, and medical expenses), coach and support staff compensation, and athletics scholarships. The 69 "Power" colleges in the most competitive DI conferences accounted for more than half of this spending. To help cover athletics expenses, DI college athletics programs generated $13.1 billion in revenue during the 2023–24 academic year. Power colleges generated $10 billion of this total amount, primarily through the sale of media rights to broadcast games, game day revenue (including ticket sales), and donations.

Across DI colleges, 94 percent of athletics programs, including 49 of the 69 Power colleges, spent more than they generated in revenue in the 2023–24 academic year. The median college reported a gap of $20.6 million. This gap was larger than the median a decade earlier ($12.3 million). Over this period, spending increased more than generated revenue in all DI subdivisions. As generated revenue generally did not cover program expenses, most DI colleges reported contributing substantial funding to support athletics programs. Colleges contributed a total of $7.2 billion in the 2023–24 academic year. These college contributions are funded by tuition and fees paid by students, as well as other unrestricted funds from the college, such as income from investments. College contributions indirectly include federal funds students receive in federal student aid to pay their tuition and fees...

All DII athletics programs spent more than the revenue they generated in the 2023–24 academic year. Combined, they spent $2.7 billion that year. To help cover this spending, they generated $0.4 billion and received $2.3 billion in college contributions...

Full report at https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-26-108640.

at August 11, 2026 No comments:

Labels: athletics

Chinese Gifts

From the Daily Californian: *UC Berkeley is disputing a claim from the U.S. Department of Education that it had received $224.5 million in gifts and contracts from Chinese sources over the past 25 years. The Education Department published a dashboard earlier this year tracking Section 117 reports of foreign funding from "countries of concern," including China.*

UC Berkeley spokesperson Dan Mogulof said in an email that campus believes the data in the Education Department's dashboard "(does) not provide an accurate reflection of our current international academic partnerships." Mogulof added that campus is currently evaluating the department's data against its internal records. UC Berkeley submitted its biannual Section 117-compliant report of foreign funding last week, reporting no contracts and $4.5 million in gifts from Chinese sources, according to Mogulof...

U.S. Secretary of Education Linda McMahon released a letter Monday asking every postsecondary institution in the country to address a series of questions, including how universities will protect their academic programs from foreign influence...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/uc-berkeley-disputes-224m-chinese-funding-claim-by-department-of-education/article_6fede9b5-68e0-417f-9da1-3485b31049da.html.

at August 11, 2026 No comments:

Labels: fund raising, politics, UC-Berkeley

Monday, August 10, 2026

If it's from the Big Ten, UCLA went along - Part 2

JOINT STATEMENT
FROM THE BIG TEN & SEC PRESIDENTS AND CHANCELLORS
The Big Ten Conference and Southeastern Conference support the Protect College Sports Act as currently drafted, following detailed and productive negotiations with Senators Cruz, Cantwell and Schmitt and their respective staffs.
We appreciate the substantial work that has gone into this effort.
B1G
SEC

On August 3, we noted that the Big Ten, the athletic conference to which UCLA belongs, had signed off on a bill in the US Senate that would regulate NIL payments and other compensation elements for college athletes. Since the Big Ten made the endorsement, presumably UCLA went along.

The "NIL Bill" is now apparently hung up in the Senate. From The Hill:

Senate Republicans say getting consent to move forward on the Protect College Sports Act, a bipartisan bill to set rules for compensating and recruiting college athletes, is holding up a broader deal on funding the government, confirming Todd Blanche as attorney general and starting the five-week Senate recess. Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) told GOP colleagues at a lunch meeting [last] Friday that he views the college sports bill — which has been dubbed the "NIL bill" because it would set standards for using athletes' name, image and likeness

— as the "chokepoint" for getting a deal done to fund the government and start the August recess, according to a source familiar with the internal meeting.

A senior Senate GOP aide confirmed there's agreement on voting on everything on Senate Majority Leader John Thune's (R-S.D.) to-do list, but there are about 10 holds on the college sports bill. Senate GOP leaders circulated a "hotline" alert on Friday afternoon proposing votes to amend the continuing resolution funding government to strip out a controversial hemp-related provision, to pass the continuing resolution itself and to confirm Blanche as attorney general, as well as votes on a motion to proceed to the college sports bill. Under the proposed hotline, the Senate would then vote on the college sports bill itself if the motion to proceed to it is successful...

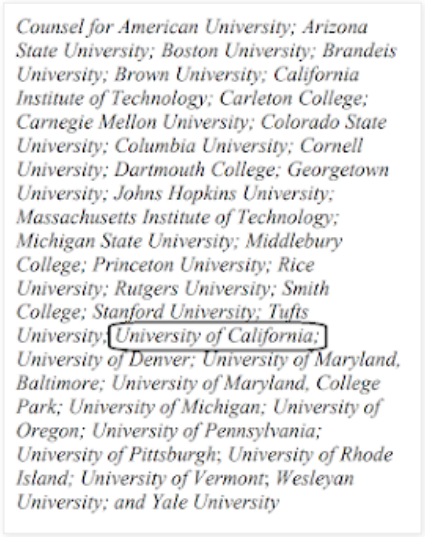
Full story at https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/6017663-senate-nil-bill-funding-blanche-recess/.

at August 10, 2026 No comments:

Labels: athletics, politics, UCLA

UC & Other Universities Support Harvard

From The Dartmouth: *[Dartmouth] signed onto an amicus brief filed July 22 with the First Circuit Court of Appeals in support of Harvard University's April lawsuit against the Trump Administration. Thirty-five other colleges and universities also signed the brief, including all Ivy League universities except Harvard. In the ongoing case, the Trump administration is appealing a September 2025 ruling in favor of Harvard after the administration froze $2.2 billion in federal grants because the university refused to comply with federal demands to make institutional changes such as reforming admissions and hiring practices, shutting down diversity, equity and inclusion practices and addressing antisemitism "or other bias" in campus programs.*


Counsel for American University; Arizona State University; Boston University; Brandeis University; Brown University; California Institute of Technology; Carleton College; Carnegie Mellon University; Colorado State University; Columbia University; Cornell University; Dartmouth College; Georgetown University; Johns Hopkins University; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Michigan State University; Middlebury College; Princeton University; Rice University; Rutgers University; Smith College; Stanford University; Tufts University; University of California; University of Denver; University of Maryland, Baltimore; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Michigan; University of Oregon; University of Pennsylvania; University of Pittsburgh; University of Rhode Island; University of Vermont; Wesleyan University; and Yale University

The brief argues that "even temporary cuts" to federal research funding could have "permanent effects" which "endangers" the "life-changing and history-altering innovations" that arise from "basic research" conducted at colleges and universities... Amici institutions listed advancements in "scientific progress" made possible by federal funding — such as the computer, DNA sequencing, the pacemaker and the "decades-long collaboration among academia, government and industry" which produced the internet — as "enormous long-term benefits" of university research...

Full story at https://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2026/08/flavin-dartmouth-signs-brief-in-support-of-harvard-in-research-funding-lawsuit-against-trump-administration.

List in image above and brief at:

https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.ca1.53667/gov.uscourts.ca1.53667.00108480602.0.pdf.

at August 10, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Arizona State University, Boston University, CalTech, Colorado State U, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Michigan State University, Middlebury, MIT, Princeton U, Rice, Rutgers, Smith College, Stanford, Tufts, UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 429

From the Washington Post: *After Johns Hopkins University public health researcher Fatima Ameaka was detained by immigration authorities as she boarded a domestic flight [last] Tuesday, the Department of Homeland Security said she had overstayed her visa "in violation of our nation's laws." Ameaka's lawyer, Benjamin Osorio, said that claim is "not true," citing immigration documents he says buttress his client's case. Ameaka — a native of Cameroon whose Hopkins colleagues have praised for her work advancing public health — was transported from Baltimore-Washington International Marshall Airport to ICE facilities in Virginia, Louisiana and Texas before being released late [last] Friday.*

Her case shows how the Trump administration has begun using domestic air travel and alleged visa violations by foreign nationals as a way to step up deportations around the country... Ameaka, 31, entered the U.S. legally in June 2023 on a Fulbright Scholarship to study for a master's in public health. Her Fulbright ended in June 2024 and she was hired as a research associate at the university in September of that year, according to her LinkedIn profile and interviews with her colleagues. Tom Inglesby, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, where Ameaka was employed, said she came to the U.S. for a "Fulbright degree, and then stayed on with a visa to work in our center." A copy of an employment authorization document, provided by her lawyer, shows it expiring in December 2029...

Full story at https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2026/08/01/johns-hopkins-health-researcher-released-after-airport-ice-detention/.

at August 10, 2026 No comments:

Labels: diversity, Johns Hopkins, politics

Increased bus service

Service Changes Begin August 9, 2026

Beginning Sunday, August 9, service improvements designed to make riding easier, faster, and more convenient go into effect! Riders will benefit from expanded service hours and enhanced access and connectivity on multiple routes serving the UCLA campus, UCLA Medical Center, and Westwood/Rancho Park Metro Rail E Line Station.

These enhancements are part of our ongoing Brighter Blue service improvement plan, which focuses on making public transit a more appealing alternative to driving and supports Santa Monica's commitment to a cleaner, greener future.

Use our trip planner or download the *Transit* app to plan your trip and view the most up-to-date travel information. Our Customer Service team is available Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., to help you get where you're going. Give us a call at (310) 451-5444.

NOTE: Details by route at:

https://www.bigbluebus.com/Routes-And-Schedules/ServiceChanges.aspx.

at August 10, 2026 No comments:

Labels: transportation, UCLA

Sunday, August 9, 2026

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 187

From the Harvard Crimson: *Harvard withheld annual raises and performance bonuses from unionized academic workers across the University this summer, prompting Harvard Law School clinical instructors to file an unfair labor practice charge late last month alleging the move violated federal labor law. Union representatives said they knew of no Harvard Academic Workers-United Auto Workers members in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard Medical School, or Harvard Divinity School who received the raises awarded to non-union employees.*

At the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering, employees represented by HAW-UAW were informed by the institute's human resources department that they would not receive the annual performance bonus or the July 1 salary increase, according to an email obtained by The Crimson... To prevent unilateral decisions that could undermine the bargaining process, employers are required under the NLRA to maintain status quo terms of employment while a contract is under negotiation. But the central dispute between the union and Harvard is whether Harvard's history of awarding annual raises established a status quo the University was required to continue.

"You have to look at all the facts," said Risa L. Lieberwitz, a professor of labor and employment law at Cornell University. "Is there a pattern that was established, and if it was interrupted, did that change the nature of the status quo?" Harvard has argued that maintaining the status quo means keeping wages constant until compensation is settled in bargaining...

Full story at https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2026/8/6/haw-withheld-raises-bonuses/.

at August 09, 2026 No comments:

Labels: Harvard

Left Unsaid - Part 2 (told you so)

Diligent blog readers may recall our comments on a systemwide Academic Senate request for campus senates to respond to UC changes in supply chain management.* We noted at the time

that the topic was not an attention grabber because there was no clear summary of what was being proposed that was new and why those changes might matter. We noted that grant holders in fields where purchasing was important would potentially be interested, IF they had such a summary.

As expected, the reactions from the campuses were predictably limited and muted, absent a clear summary. The cover letter from the Senate chair notes:

*The review materials also made it difficult for reviewers to identify the complete set of revisions.***

A stronger letter might have said that if meaningful comments were wanted, a meaningful highlighting of key changes would be necessary, and that absent such a summary, the review cannot proceed.

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2026/06/left-unsaid.html.

**https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/council-chair-to-systemwide-procurement-bus-43-7-24-26.pdf.

at August 09, 2026 No comments:

Labels: UC

Straws in the Wind - Part 428 (Failsafe)

From Inside Higher Ed: *Starting in fall 2027, the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts will grade all first-year students as pass/no credit for their first semester. Students will still receive grades and instructor feedback on their coursework, but the grades will not count toward their GPAs or appear on their external transcripts, which will state that all LSA first-semester grades are automatically designated P/NC. The pilot program is designed to help create "an environment where college students can acclimate to the demands of a University of Michigan education and pursue new academic challenges," according to the LSA webpage announcing the change. "We believe that covering grades will help students start strong and curb the mental health crisis unfolding among college-aged individuals."*

Officials also said they hope eliminating grades will foster connection rather than competition among students, and encourage them to "explore a subject that may not come easily to them or take a course in a new field without the fear that a low grade may have long-term consequences."
...

Full story at https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2026/08/05/umich-college-shifts-pnc-grading-first-year-students.

These things don't always work out as planned:

The film follows a crisis caused by a critical error that sends a group of U.S. bombers to destroy Moscow, and the ensuing attempts to stop the bomber group before it can deploy a nuclear first strike...

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fail_Safe_(1964_film).

at August 09, 2026 No comments:

Labels: U of Michigan

Saturday, August 8, 2026

Trouble on the 405 this weekend

From Patch: Traffic will be impacted on the 405 Freeway and nearby roads beginning Friday when construction will shut down several lanes and ramps of the interstate in the San Fernando Valley for the entire weekend.

Here's a look at the closures, planned for 10 p.m. Friday, Aug. 7 through 5 a.m. Monday, Aug. 10:

Southbound 405

- Southbound 405 will be reduced to three lanes between Ventura Boulevard and Mulholland Drive
- The Ventura Boulevard on-ramp to the southbound 405 will be closed
- The Valley Vista Boulevard/Sepulveda Boulevard on-ramp to the southbound 405 will be closed

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Northbound 405

- The northbound 405 off-ramp to Getty Center Drive will be closed

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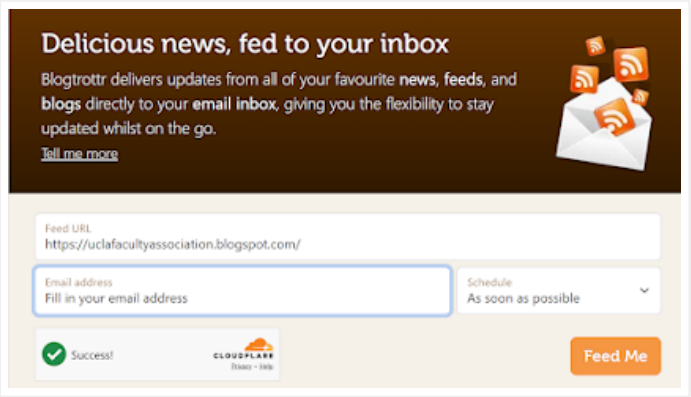
Full story at https://patch.com/california/santamonica/s/klsr9/405-freeway-closures-to-snarl-traffic-in-la-county-beginning-friday.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: traffic, UCLA

Want to subscribe to this blog?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and put in your email address.

You will then receive an email at the email address you provided asking you to confirm. After you confirm, you will receive an email notification of new postings whenever they appear. If there are, say, three postings on a particular day, you will receive three notifications (one for each one).

Note and full disclosure: There are ads on these notifications.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Best

Yours truly is always skeptical about rankings such as those below. But you will undoubtedly be told about it by the three UC systems listed. So you might as well read about it here:

BEST HOSPITALS HONOR ROLL 2026-2027: From US News and World Report

Brigham and Women's Hospital

Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

Cleveland Clinic

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania

Houston Methodist Hospital

Johns Hopkins Hospital

Massachusetts General Hospital

Mayo Clinic

Mayo Clinic-Arizona

Mayo Clinic-Florida

Mount Sinai Hospital

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital-Columbia and Cornell

Northwestern Medicine-Northwestern Memorial Hospital

NYU Langone Hospitals

Rush University Medical Center

Stanford Health Care-Stanford Hospital

UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center

UC San Diego Health-La Jolla, Hillcrest, and East Campus Medical Centers

UCSF Health-UCSF Medical Center

University of Michigan Health-Ann Arbor

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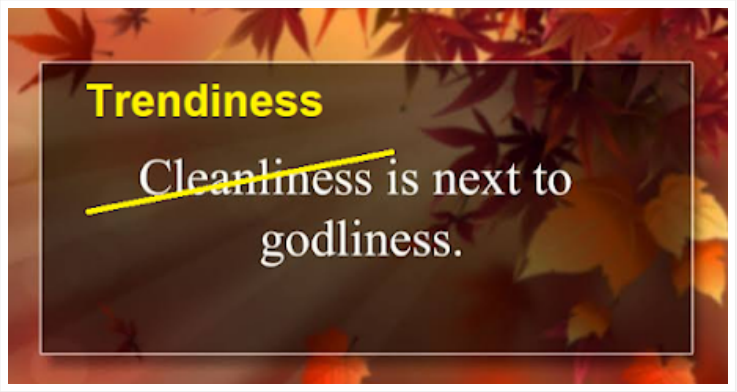
Source: https://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/rankings.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: health care, UC-San Diego, UC-San Francisco, UCLA

More or Less - Part 2 (Trendiness)



From the Daily Californian: *Twenty-three UC and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory projects were among those announced under the Department of Energy's Genesis Mission, a national initiative towards "AI-driven scientific discovery." The DOE is committing more than $5 billion to the mission, which spans national laboratories, academia and industry.*

Genesis Mission-funded projects will "enable researchers to … refine new approaches to accelerating scientific discovery and breakthroughs," according to Berkeley Lab spokesperson Jonathan Carter. Berkeley Lab contributions to the Genesis Mission will integrate AI with research into grid infrastructure, nuclear energy and more. However, for some researchers, this funding comes at an odd time given cuts to other grants. In May, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled to allow generic grant terminations by the EPA, NEH and NSF in the ongoing Thakur v. Trump lawsuit filed on behalf of UC researchers. Five days before the funding announcement, a district court ruled against President Donald Trump's administration for canceling active research grants in a separate lawsuit...

Full story at https://www.dailycal.org/news/campus/research-and-ideas/uc-berkeley-affiliated-ai-research-receives-funding-from-doe-despite-other-trump-funding-cuts/article_e729ccaa-62e5-411e-a099-45e2efff7896.html.

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From the Daily Bruin: *Facing a federal funding denial, a UCLA research group is turning to OnlyFans to raise money and bring awareness to long-term research funding difficulties. The Blumstein Lab, which studies marmot behavior, started videos of the large rodents on OnlyFans – a subscription-based adult entertainment content creation platform – under the name "OnlyMarms" after the National Science Foundation rejected the researchers' proposals to renew their grant. The researchers have received thousands of dollars in donations and subscription money since launching the account... Securing grants under the Trump administration has become increasingly difficult. The federal government has proposed sweeping changes to the*

United States Office of Management and Budget's framework for managing federal grants and suspended millions in universities' research grants...

The lab has raised more than $6,000 from OnlyMarms as of [July 29], of which OnlyFans takes 20%, according to a Rocky Mountain Biological Lab Marmot Project Instagram post...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2026/08/01/ucla-marmot-research-lab-turns-to-onlyfans-after-funding-cuts.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: politics, UC-Berkeley, UCLA

Straws in the Wind - Part 427 (Is Penn Mightier?)

From the Daily Pennsylvanian: *As Penn President Larry Jameson prepares to step down next year, he leaves behind a reputation as a stabilizing force during a turbulent era for higher education. Jameson announced his intention to leave his position as president by June 2027 in a campus-wide message last month. Since being named interim president in December 2023, he has steered the University toward institutional neutrality and launched campus-wide initiatives while confronting the lasting effects of student protests and federal turmoil. His term as permanent Penn president, which began in March 2025, will be the second shortest — longer only than that of his predecessor, Liz Magill. The University Board of Trustees has begun the search for Penn's next leader and is currently inviting community feedback through a survey.*

...Jameson was appointed interim president in December 2023 after Magill resigned amid backlash for her remarks regarding Penn's response to antisemitism. The following months were marked by pro-Palestinian protests, culminating in the Gaza Solidarity Encampment on College Green which was dismantled by police in May 2024. Weeks later, Penn instituted temporary standards for campus demonstrations — which tightened requirements for event planning and banned encampments — and initiated a review of the Guidelines on Open Expression. Nearly a year into his interim term, Jameson announced new guidelines surrounding Penn's "response to external events." At the time, Jameson wrote that Penn would "refrain from institutional statements made in response to local and world events except for those which have direct and significant bearing on University functions" in an email to the University community.

...In April 2025, as Penn and other universities were impacted by sweeping federal changes to higher education, Jameson cited institutional neutrality as the reason for Penn's quieter stance... Jameson is expected to review the final draft recommendations and publish the new open expression guidelines. The deadline for a finalized version was extended further into the fall following campus pushback...

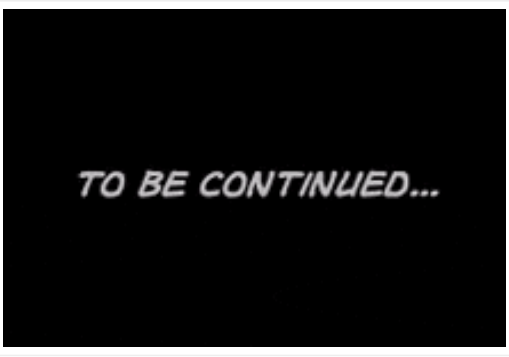
In March 2025, the Trump administration froze $175 million in federal funding to Penn, criticizing the University's failure to remove transgender athletes from women's sports. Penn entered a resolution agreement with the administration in July — becoming the first Ivy League to settle with the White House and restoring the University's funding...

Full story at https://www.thedp.com/article/2026/08/penn-president-larry-jameson-institutional-neutrality-civil-rights-federal-government-trump.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, politics, U of Pennsylvania

Dan Mitchell's Blog Continues



This blog continues Dan Mitchell's blog concerning UCLA and UC originally at:

https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/

starting July 23, 2026.

at August 08, 2026 No comments:

Labels: miscellaneous

Friday, August 7, 2026

Yours truly will tell you how students get in for less

Crimson Education
Sponsored
Admission to UCLA, Berkeley and USC is more competitive than ever — especially for in-state private school students. On August 11, join a Former UC Admissions Officer to learn what your child must do to get in. See less
EXCLUSIVE WEBINAR
UCLA
How California Students Get Into UCLA & Berkeley
AUGUST 12 | 7PM PT

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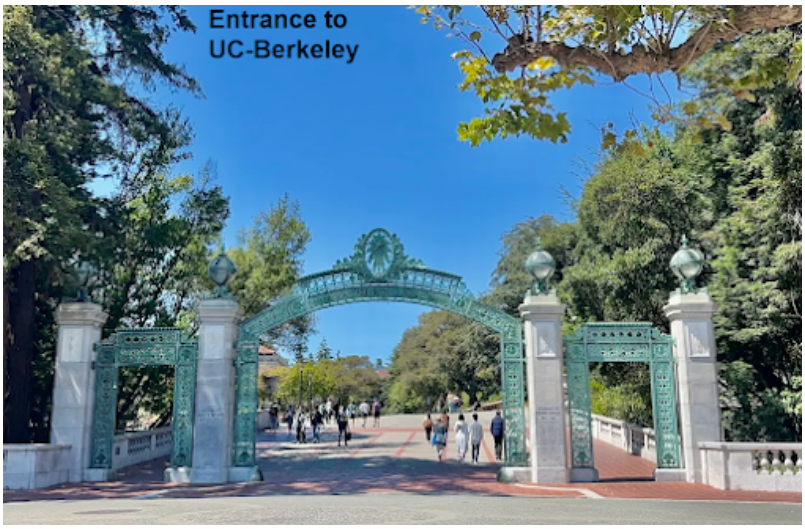
One way students get into Berkeley: They walk in through Sather Gate.



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One way students get into UCLA: They walk in through the Westwood and Le Conte entrance.

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So there you have the answers, courtesy of yours truly. And they didn't cost you a (now-discontinued) penny.

at August 07, 2026 No comments:

Labels: admissions, UC-Berkeley, UCLA

7.25 > 6.75

July 30, 2026

Nathan Brostrom

Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer, UC Finance

Re: Recommendation to Increase the Actuarial Rate of Return for UCRP

Dear CFO Brostrom:

At the July 22, 2026 meeting, the Academic Council unanimously endorsed the recommendation of the University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) and its Task Force on Investments and Retirement (TFIR) to increase the assumed actuarial rate of return for the University of California Retirement Plan (UCRP) from 6.75% to 7.25%.

Council first reviewed the proposal at our June 2026 meeting, when TFIR presented its analysis of UCRP's long-term investment performance, funding position, and cash flows. TFIR concluded that the current assumption is unnecessarily conservative and increasing it to 7.25% would better reflect expected long-term returns, reduce unnecessary contribution requirements, and preserve resources for the University's core mission without reducing pension benefits.

Before taking action, Council asked the University Committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB) to review the proposal. UCPB subsequently endorsed the proposed increase, while emphasizing the importance of adhering to Regents Policy 5601. Council agreed that UC should follow the policy's established mechanisms for adjusting contributions when investment performance differs from actuarial assumptions and that future funding shortfalls should not be addressed by shifting additional costs to University employees.

Council recognizes that the actuarial rate is a long-term planning assumption rather than a guarantee of future investment performance.

Nevertheless, Council concluded that the evidence presented by TFIR supports the proposed 7.25% rate and that maintaining an unnecessarily conservative assumption carries substantial opportunity costs for UC.

I am forwarding the attached UCFW-TFIR proposal and UCPB endorsement for your consideration as the University reviews the actuarial assumptions governing UCRP Sincerely,

Ahmet Palazoglu

Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council, Chief Investment Officer Bachher, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Nava, Vice President Henderson, UCFW Chair Bales, TFIR Chair Hollenbach, UCPB Chair Brosnan, Senate Division Executive Directors, Senate Executive Director Lin

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Comment:

The important thing to note is that changing assumptions about the future does not change the future. The actual rate of return that will occur in the future depends on the investment strategy (the mix of assets held by the plan) and future financial market conditions. From the TFIR report:

"*Changing the assumed rate of return does not change the actual return on investments; actual returns to the UCRP investment portfolio follow from the asset allocation policy set by The Regents and the returns those assets produce*."

Note that the same can be said about liabilities of the plan which depend on policies regarding eligibility that may be enacted by future Regents, changes in life expectancy, changes in hiring and retirement behavior at UC, etc. Making assumptions about such matters in the future does not, by itself, change the actual future course of events.

Basically, being more conservative about assumptions requires more funding to achieve a planned 100% pension funding ratio. Being less conservative requires less funding, but increases the risk of underfunding. **Although it is not explicitly stated in the report, in a period in which the funding model for UC is under strain, the attraction of being less conservative - even if it entails more risk - increases.**

Overhead

From the Daily Californian : A White House science report released July 21 called for cutting back overhead costs universities collect on fe...